been some, who have really asserted a duplicity of gods, in the sense declared, that is, of animal-ish or perceptive beings self-existent; one as the principle of good, and the other of evil. And this Ditheism of theirs seems to be thexnearest approach, that was ever really made to Polytheism ; unless we should here give heed to Plutarch,* who seems to make the ancient Persians, besides their two gods, the good and the evil, or Oromasdes and Arimanius, to have asserted also a third middle deity, called by them, Mithras; "or to some ecclesiastic writers, who impute a trinity of gods to Marcion[b] (though Tertullian[c] be yet more liberal, and increase the number to an ennead). For those, that were commonly called Tritheists, being but mistaken Christians and Trinitarians, fall not under this consideration. Now, as for that forementioned Ditheism, or opinion of two gods, a good and an evil one, it is evident, that its original sprung from nothing else, but first a firm persuasion of the essential goodness of the Deity, together with a conceit, that the evil that is in the world, was altogether inconsistent and unrecon-cilablewith the same; and that, therefore, for the solving of this phenomenon, it was absolutely necessary to suppose another animalish principle self-existent, or an evil god. Wherefore, as these Ditheists, as to all that which is good in the world, held a monarchy, or one sole principle and original ; so it is plain, that had it not been for this business of evil (which they conceived could not

» De Iside et Osiride, torn. ii. p. 369.

[b] Vide Euseb. Hist, Eccles. lib. v. cap. xliL p. 177. etauctores illos quos Jo. Bapt. Cotelerius laudat ad Constit Apost. p. 339. torn. i. Pa-trum Apostol.

[c] *Libro i. adversus Marcionem, cap. xvi. p. 237,238.